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DEPARTMENT FOR AF/E
LONDON, PARIS, ROME FOR AFRICA WATCHER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/01/2017
TAGS: [ASEC](#) [MOPS](#) [PREL](#) [ET](#)
SUBJECT: ETHIOPIA: GENERAL WARD AND ETHIOPIAN PRIME
MINISTER MELES ON AFRICA COMMAND

Classified By: Ambassador Donald Yamamoto
Reasons: 1.4 (B) and (D).

¶1. (C) In a brief courtesy call on Prime Minister Meles on February 26, General Ward described preparations being made to establish an Africa Command. The PM remarked that Ethiopia welcomed the move, noting that it will provide enhanced coordination and cooperation among all countries in Africa, bringing together all the programs and operations currently being handled by three different combatant commands operating in Africa. Meles raised only one concern -- he felt that Africa Command would focus at first on African countries under EUCOM and that those African countries under CENTCOM and PACOM, like Ethiopia, may "fall between two stools," experiencing a temporary disruption in programs and attention. General Ward assured the Prime Minister that there will be a seamless transition and that great care will be given to all regions of Africa as Africa Command is established. The PM praised the relationship with CENTCOM as productive and beneficial, and looked forward to continued strong relations as Africa Command takes over operations for all of Africa.

¶2. (C) Prime Minister Meles remarked that it was a hectic day with his hosting of the Sanaa Forum. Leaders from Somalia, Yemen and Sudan attended the meeting, which focused on Somalia. Meles termed the forum "very productive." (NOTE: Post will meet later with the PM to discuss in detail the Sanaa Forum. END NOTE)

¶3. (C) COMMENT: The Prime Minister had canceled the meeting with General Ward to host the Sanaa Forum, which was called at the last minute. But the PM and his staff made every effort to chisel time out of his marathon day-long meetings with leaders attending the Forum to meet with General Ward, underscoring Meles' close commitment to working cooperatively with the U.S. military. The PM consistently praises the U.S. military relationship because of its ability to conduct humanitarian programs or provide intelligence quickly and with few bureaucratic obstacles. END COMMENT.

¶4. (U) Attendees included General Ward, POLAD Ambassador Yates, Captain Gradeck, LTC Bishop, and from the Embassy, DATT Col Zedler and Ambassador Yamamoto (notetaker).

¶5. (U) General Ward's party cleared this message.
YAMAMOTO